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Thomas Freeman - 1827

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BRIEF NOTICE

OF THE

Life and Last Illness

OF

THOMAS FREEMAN.

“ Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers,” &c. *1 Tim. iv. 12.*

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FROM THE
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February 3, 1942

A BRIEF NOTICE, &c.

The young man who is the subject of the following pages, was brought up by his parents in the communion of the Church of England; but, yielding to the impressions of Divine Truth revealed in the secret of the soul, he became dissatisfied with the mode and forms of worship in which he had been educated. Being induced by the example of an elder brother, to attend the meetings of the Society of Friends, he found a satisfaction to his seeking mind, in the religious principles which they profess; and received confirmation in the belief that nothing short of the mediation and the operation of the gift of Infinite Mercy to fallen man, could give him access to the Fountain of living water; so that it might become in him, “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

The progress of this work of sanctification, being exhibited by some of his letters, will be introduced in his own words, with such

trifling verbal corrections as may be needful to render *extracts* intelligible to the reader. The first of these letters contains also some remarks respecting an individual, who had been, under the divine blessing, an instrument of good to him, and whose care and solicitude for him, he viewed as maternal.

LETTER I.

Frome, Sept. 13th, 1822.

DEAR —

Having received the parcel of books, which I was pleased to find you took an active and affectionate part in preparing for me, as well as in handing me all the information you could respecting our dear friend, who, I was sorry to hear, had been dangerously ill, and whose request I am following by my present reply; I cannot but express my gratitude that her stage of illness was so far advanced, as to warrant an expression of no fear of danger. I should have been glad to have returned an earlier reply; but you know a convenient opportunity cannot be procured to sit down to write, except on a Sunday. *I can join with you in the anticipation of*

spending a *few more* pleasant seasons together, ere *that change* takes place which *must* separate us. Should an alteration take place for the worst, you will not, of course, fail of letting me know it.

You will, I expect, be desirous of hearing how I received, or whether I have commenced reading, and do like Clarkson; or, in other words, how I may be advancing in that progress of religious views, after which every *true believer* is hungering and thirsting. You have, I find, partly if not wholly read it through yourself, and could, I doubt not, have handed me many a useful lesson worthy my attention. But far am I from extolling or depending on these outward means. They may all be very well in their places; but Clarkson, in the volume alluded to by you, says, "We cannot call the Scriptures the fountain of all truth and goodness, &c.—because the principal Fountain of truth must be the *Truth itself*." You will unite with me, I know, in believing, that useful lessons may be learned from Clarkson, by beholding as it were in a glass the reflection of our own images. Hence our dear friend says, "fresh beauties will be unfolded to thy views, and oftentimes be permitted to speak

home to thy state; but the work must first begin in the heart. It would be useless to the admirer of loftiness of language, although there may be beautiful passages, to look for beauties in Clarkson. The mind must have something greater in view." And yet I cannot but think that in the work there are some of the most beautiful feelings displayed.

I should like for you to have been at Frome a Sunday or two ago, there being a Friend here, in the ministry, who held a meeting here twice in the course of the day, and supped at our house in the evening. I think he manifested the greatest sweetness of disposition. A passage or two of his, I mentioned to my brother in a note, relating to too great an attachment to this world; which he endeavoured to explain by referring to the circumstance of Jesus casting out of the temple those that sold doves—things that were in themselves innocent.

I have commenced the reading of Clarkson; and as my time is mostly pretty well filled up, I shall not get much time for reading it but on Sundays; so that it will take me some time to go through the whole. But so different do all other religious views appear *on directing my attention closely to these,*

that I cannot of course think of any other than our place of worship; although, as you perhaps may have felt, we frequently feel a blushing—a suffering of ourselves to be cheated. O! may we be made faithful in little matters, until strength be vouchsafed for greater sacrifices. You will, I suppose, spend all your winter evenings at _____, as it seems requisite. I should be glad to spend the Sunday with you, as I know it is directed to the most pleasant improvement; but an opportunity seems to offer of my spending the afternoon and evening by myself; and when *alone*, what does there seem to be *wanting more*.

I have latterly read a great deal in William Thompson's letters; and have greatly admired his cultivation of the mind. Such a lively instance of it we shall scarcely find again. How independent he must have felt himself of all outward forms of religion! and what an exalted view he had of his fellow-creatures! There seems, in general, not to be so much experience in any other books as in Friends' writings.

15th. Being about to send off my letter this morning, I seem disposed to make a little addition. Amongst other things I have

to mention that Mr. —— last night engaged with an apprentice on trial, not a member of the Friends' Society, about the age of sixteen, of course totally unknown to me. Well, amongst whomsoever our lot may be cast, *may we be emboldened to give up to serve God*; his love, as our friend observes, "rectifies all that is amiss," and, may I not add, produces happiness in our families.

ADIEU.

At the time of writing the preceding letter, Thomas Freeman was about the age of eighteen years, and an apprentice to a member of our Society, at Frome, in Somersetshire. He seems, however, to have contemplated the taking of an apprentice not in membership with us, as a probable source of trial to him in his present situation of mind; yet he himself had been taken into the family whilst under similar circumstances.

As the next letter intimates, his parents became dissatisfied with the preference his elder brother and himself now manifested towards our religious Society; this, though a trial of his faith, appears not to have shaken *his steadfastness* in pursuing what he believed

to be his religious duty, being made willing to obey the Saviour's injunction to follow Him, even if it should prove to the sacrifice of these tender natural ties. The next letter is dated about three months after the preceding; and, though not addressed to the same individual, is a continuation of the subject, which occupies a principal part of the former letter.

LETTER II.

Frome, December 8th, 1822.

DEAR ——

It seems to me a long time since I last took up my pen; but it has not, I am satisfied, tended in any degree to lessen the flow of my affection towards you all. And being directed by you to write with my usual candour and affection, I hope I can add freedom too, through the medium of that love, which is well known to each other. It had been my intention to delay writing till I had got through the first volume of Clarkson, and Job Scott: but I have been delayed longer than I expected, in reading them through; for I have not contented myself with merely making marks, but have, for my amusement,

and perhaps for a future perusal, attempted writing down on a piece of paper, those passages that I could not comprehend the meaning of, with those that were strikingly in uniformity with my own feelings; a copy of which I intend inclosing for your perusal. I had forgotten that there was not an opportunity of your hearing any information from my mother, who, I expected, would have mentioned that the apprentice had been put off, and that I am still by myself; neither do I see that there is any occasion for another, as we have latterly been going on very comfortably. I have heard from my mother twice lately. In her last, I found she had taken offence in something I had said in my letter to her; and she told me, she had hitherto looked forward with pleasure to my coming home, but now she could not.

I am of opinion that the young man who has latterly come to our meeting has felt the secret power of religion in his own mind; and that, though he appears to be outwardly destitute of any instruction, yet will he become more inwardly acquainted, and divinely led in due time. He must certainly have felt the inshinings of divine *love in his heart*, to have prevailed so far

over him as to use the plain dress and address: and though, in his infantile state, he may not know how to lisp it forth; yet will ability be given, as he becomes obedient thereto. The whole of his conduct seems to be in uniformity therewith.

I am still content with spending as much of my time alone as I can; and do often run over in my mind your meetings and enjoyments together. — has many times wished me to be reading books that would not be at all useful, even in moral improvement; namely, fabulous stories, such as she has observed have been introduced into conversation in company; and she thought I might appear particular in not having read them; but I am aware that they would be of no service, and that my time could be much better employed.

December 15th. It is now a week since I commenced my letter, and the time for you to hear from me seems to be quite arrived. I beg you will excuse my delay; but I could not obtain time to finish it last Sunday; satisfied, I hope, that my time is filled up, in the little intervals I can call my own, in gaining such strength, in the *better* sense, as may be permitted to be handed me. We have with us to-day two ministers, who

are about to dine with us, and have appointed a public meeting this evening. They appear to be firm and encouraging witnesses of the *truth*; our family too seem to be pleased in the entertainment of *such*.

On reviewing the former part of my letter, I had almost concluded on not sending what is there inserted; but satisfied that more and more surrender must be mine, I thought it might afford a portion of interest to you in looking it over. I had forgot to mention that your letter was received with great satisfaction; but I can hardly excuse _____, so long does it seem since I heard from them;—besides, we might prove useful to each other. I much wish to come and see you, but I fear an opportunity will not offer this winter. I begin to get things in order so as to admit of a little time for retirement in the course of the days now; and I trust it is not lost to me. The days have seemed long to me; but I now begin to get over it.

I am satisfied, and I hope mother is convinced, that there is no want of *affection* in any of her sons. I believe she will not feel liberty to exercise such severity to *me* as to my *brothers*, being separated so far from her.

Well, dear friend, I hope I shall ever act with the faithfulness of a younger brother; and if counsel should be committed to me, I may not be backward in handing it to *them*.

I have been called upon to give notice to my neighbours respecting the evening meeting, and must leave the remaining part of the sheet till after meeting.

The meeting was numerously and respectably attended; the two Friends were engaged twice. I admired the beauty with which the one enlarged on the subjects which the other had touched on, as if, though perhaps not more experienced yet more perceptible, and far more descriptive.

By humble submission to the secret convictions of divine grace, and obedience to its manifestations, the subject of this memoir was enabled to bring forth fruits unto holiness; the present effect of which he happily witnessed to be precious peace, even in the midst of many tribulations.

To a diligent attendance of our religious meetings, the opportunity for which, afforded him by his employer, he gratefully embraced, he added the continuance of the practice,

alluded to in his letters, of private retirement, and also that of the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures, which appear to have been highly conducive to his religious progress.

After about two years thus passed, he found it his indispensable duty to take up the cross, by adopting the peculiarities of our religious profession, in the whole of his external deportment, and in his appearance. By his obedience in these respects, his fidelity to his blessed Master was put to a severe test. It was fully proved by his continued adherence to required duty, consistently with that divine precept which the Saviour taught, when He said—"He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me;" for his faithfulness not only incurred parental displeasure, but appeared likely to militate against his temporal interest.

The letter which succeeds; and which was addressed to the individual who had, through the divine blessing, been made an instrument of good to him, evinces that his engagement of mind, to come up in faithful obedience, had the ascendancy over all other considerations.

This letter is without date, but clearly relates to that period of his short pilgrimage *at which we are now arrived.*

LETTER III.

MY DEAR —

I received thy packet last evening, with the many tender manifestations of thy care and concern for my good and future well-being. I have read, and entered deeply into the contents of thy valuable letter ; and it was permitted to prove truly to me, “an allurement ;” and in its kind salutations met me in the very things wherein my mind had been closely pressed and deeply exercised before the reception of it ; and the call which thou hadst to hand me, was, to stand forth in the strength of the Lord.

Ah ! the mind that is softened by affliction can look with [an eye of charity on the imperfections of its fellow creatures. Let me have been ever so short in discovering the line of conduct which signalizes the path of duty, I hope thou wilt ever find me ready to listen to the voice of instruction, and to yield to the “rod” of correction. And though thy feelings have been wounded ; yet I believe, as to the immortal part, thou mayst feel consolation : nothing short of this, I am satisfied, will tend to comfort thee. And though we may have been backward in bringing all into

the garner of the Lord, and in not rendering up the gleanings as well as the choice fruits ; truly thou must have been glad with every handful, to celebrate the praise of Him who enables us to plant and water, and who only can bring forth the increase. May the harvest be indeed abundant, and more labourers be found to labour therein ; as thou hast been made to labour for myself and my brothers. May none of the wasted corn be forgotten ; so that all may rejoice together, in having enough and to spare. May the pure and self-denying principle be allowed to swallow up the imperfections of our weak and mortal nature, thereby covering the blemishes and wounds to which we are subject in time ; and O that the sweet inshinings of such precious love and unity as we are favoured to experience, may ever be ours !

I received dear——'s letter ; but he did not represent to me thy illness fully—in tenderness, no doubt, he wished to spare me from partaking of so bitter a cup ; but a few days after my dear aunt gave me full information. I am anxious to come and see you. I believe, as heretofore, quietness and peace would be allowed to be the covering of our minds, and *[that we should again enjoy]* the sweet conso-

lations we have found from the highest source to flow: memorable, profitable seasons have we passed together. Since we parted at Bristol my time has been much spent by myself. I have no information from home. I have written twice, but have obtained no answer; the last letter was in the plain language.

— manifests as much kindness as I could have expected; and condescends further in some instances. He took an opportunity of speaking to me about using the plain language, very kindly. The period I believe is arrived, as thou justly observes, for me to make a fuller dedication.—O! it is time the work was begun, the effect whereof, is to pull down the fortifications of our own wills, and to build upon a sure foundation; to let the workmanship appear clean and clear in the sight of all men. Yes, it may be compared to a building: for every stone that is laid, every new beginning we make, lifts us higher in the observation of the World, or rather, makes us more conspicuous, which is to them also truly pulling down their strong holds.

Ah! how does the natural man tremble at beholding the fruits of the renewed and spiritual nature! experience confirms this

us ; and plainly discovers to us, how it is with the world. How does all that is of a weak and unstable nature shrink, and desire to be concealed from beholding that which takes place in the renovation of the immortal part. I have not been, till lately, so fully sensible of the great opposition there is felt in the spirit of mortals ; how fully they are given to discern between right and wrong ; and how perceptibly the *latter* is too often chosen. Alas ! how sadly is the mind led astray after the vain customs of the world ! how much innocence in that which is of divine origin, do they tend to stifle and bury in oblivion ! whereas, if man stood forth stripped of all the vain ornaments of the body, divine grace would check many of the first risings of sin, and would prove sufficient to teach every one that the ways of righteousness are peace. The few remaining days we have to pass below, may we be preserved in this nearness and oneness in the truth ; and if it be our Heavenly Father's will, mayst thou be spared longer to us, and be allowed to see increasing fruits of thy labour of love for us.

During the continuance of those trials
to which allusion has been made, he

was received into membership with our religious Society, by the Monthly Meeting in the compass of which he resided ; subsequently to which, by the interference of a gracious Providence, all those obstacles which had presented so formidable an appearance, were at length removed ; his parents evincing a cordial acquiescence in the religious course which his brother and himself had so conscientiously chosen, as the only path to peace.

The last letter from which extracts will be presented to the reader, was addressed to the same individual as No. 3 ; and was written about eight months before his decease.

LETTER IV.

Frome, 20th 2nd Month, 1825.

MY DEAR ——

I trust the love that so preciously unites us as in the bond of Christian discipleship, expanding in our hearts, is often permitted by the Father of mercies, to whom alone we must look up for spiritual aid, in his abundant goodness, to humble our minds under a sense and tender feeling

of manifold favours bestowed upon us, unworthy creatures, as we may feel ourselves to be, in his sight; and I trust that the desires of our hearts made known unto Him who seeth in secret, are often engaged with and for each other, returning with peace unto our minds. It is true that we are each of us, in the strength administered, humbly endeavouring to hold on our way Zion-ward; and favoured at seasons to witness a renewal of spiritual strength; I believe we shall all know an increase of this precious love; and it will be in us, "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

2nd Month 27th. The increased salutation of love that flows from my heart towards thee and dear —, is renewedly the peaceful covering of my mind; and, as is often the case, in the condescending goodness of Him who knows *all our thoughts*, is permitted to comfort and encourage amidst surrounding trials. And, at seasons, being favoured to know an enlargement of heart tenderly expanding towards you, not unfrequently is the desire raised in my mind, that we may each of us be truly concerned to serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness; "*for the Lord is great, and greatly to be*

praised ; He is to be feared above all gods ;" and He will enable us to "sing praises unto his Name ;" for "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath He ordained praise." He will put a new song into our mouth, even praise and thanksgiving. And though we may feel unable of ourselves to help ourselves, and the language of our hearts may be, at seasons—"Oh wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?" yet are we favoured to witness a being set free from sin, through Him who died to redeem us and all mankind.

I am getting anxious for want of a letter from thee, as it has now been some time since ; and I regret that I cannot come to see thee so soon as we fixed. I hope that dear _____ was in a good degree refreshed with this opportunity of mixing and uniting with some of the sincerely soncerned, and faithful labourers in the cause of truth ; such as are concerned to follow their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in an humble and self-denying life ; taking up the daily cross to their own natural inclinations. Thus are they made useful instruments in the Lord's hands, and standard-bearers in the church. It must have been a comfort to his mind, as it was

to mine, and he I trust tended to support thy drooping soul, under all the trials and baptisms which must be passed through, in order to be redeemed from sin, through the atonement of a crucified Saviour.

Ah ! I believe as we continue faithful in small things, and yield obedience to the voice of God within us, it will be made plain before our eyes ; and, all difficulties being removed out of the way, in Infinite Wisdom, who alone could cause it to be so, greater things will, in due time, according to the Lord's appointment, be entrusted to our care. Then will the language of our hearts be on this wise : " What ailed thee, O thou sea ! that thou fleddest ? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ? Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like lambs ?" It will indeed be great and marvellous in our eyes ; and we shall feel constrained to acknowledge, " that the Lord is gracious, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil." May we surrender all that He is requiring at our hands ; and though to the poor mind the sacrifice may and does seem great, yet his goodness is sufficient for us, to carry us through the trials of this little space below ; yea, in his hands

will He bear us up ; and his peace, which passeth all understanding, will be underneath to comfort and amply reward for every privation required of us to surrender. O ! may we praise his holy Name, and unite in returning thanks for all that He hath been pleased to do for us.

The message of love from —— was delivered to me ; and very acceptable did I feel it, as well as the sweetness of spirit with which it was imparted to me. And I was also much comforted in having the company of —, which no doubt thou wilt be pleased to hear, they being made sensibly to feel the same peaceful covering of our Heavenly Father's love. The opportunity proved to be select with them. I was favoured also to get out comfortably to meeting, which proved an instructive season ; and much of a weighty, important nature was imparted, which I believe we were permitted to feel as crumbs scattered from the Master's table. One friend was engaged twice, and in a few words had to address an individual awfully and impressively amongst us, saying, "he believed there was an individual present, who would have publicly to declare the Truth to his fellow creatures, and would feel called upon to be engaged

in the important work of the ministry. O ! mayst thou continue with Christ in his temptation ; mayst thou be enabled to drink his bitter cups ; and mayst thou abide his baptisms, which will be required of thee to endure. O ! mayst thou be obedient unto death, and finally there shall be given to thee the crown of life."

We have next to view the subject of these pages, in the last solemn scene of life. He became affected with an epidemic disease, which terminated in a pulmonary consumption ; and he was affectionately received under the parental roof. The female friend, also, who has been already mentioned, was particularly invited by his mother to come and share with her, the mournful, yet consolatory task of attending her sick and dying son. From that friend has been obtained the annexed account, of the concluding scene of this short but exemplary life.

On the 6th of 10th month, 1825, she went to stay with him, at his parents' house, by his and their particular request ; and remaining there two months, was his constant companion,

and saw him breathe his last. His parents, all his brothers, and a beloved aunt, were also present at the solemn close. When the individual who furnished this account first went to him, she was accompanied by his aunt. He appeared much altered, but in a lamb-like, passive frame of mind. He said the sight of them revived him; "for," continued he, "we are linked together in a chain, united in a band not to be broken;"—and to the friend he added: "How have I longed for thy presence in body; in spirit thou hast not been absent from me. Thou lookest so delicate, I do not know how thou wilt bear what thou hast to wade through; but why should I mistrust the goodness of Him who has seen fit to raise thee up as a sister; an instrument of good in his hands to me, and to my dear brother also?"

First-day morning. He remarked: "This is the day on which many are assembled to worship the Most High, each according to what he may deem right; and I hope many a sincere-hearted one is to be found among every class: yet I consider those who endeavour to live up to the principles we profess, as a people, know more of true, vital, experimental religion, than any other class. Our profession is a high and holy one; even

that of worshiping God in spirit and in truth : and our advantages and privileges are great ; but, I fear, by too many abused or misused, among the elder as well as by the younger part of our Society : but all such will have more to answer for than others, at the solemn and great day of reckoning. I wish friends would dwell more inward—keep close to the principle in themselves, and not be looking for that *without* which is only to be felt *within* ; and what thou, my dear sister, wast required to press upon our minds, when the Lord saw fit to cast us under thy tender, maternal care. I mean, ‘Christ within, the hope of glory.’

“I wish when friends are cast among others not of our Society, they would dwell on the watch-tower ; not allowing themselves to deviate from the path of rectitude and virtue. They do much harm when they thus deviate ; and cause the truth and the espousers of it to be evil spoken of.”

At another time he said, a relation dear to him, had been much affected when reading to him and that he had bid her not to grieve for him ; for he was happy. “She was in a tender frame,” he continued, “and I hope she will allow all to work together for her good.”

Lamenting over another individual, who, he feared, was going astray, he said : " Oh ! had he been faithful, his peace would have flowed as a river ; his righteousness would long since have appeared as the waves of the sea ; but his enemies are now round about him, within and without ; and he is hedged in on every side. May the Lord still have mercy on him. May he return and repent ere it be too late."

When speaking of an absent individual to whom he was closely attached, he said : " The dews of heaven will more and more descend, and soften the hearts of — towards him ; because, like Daniel, he has been faithful in serving his God. He has preferred suffering with the people of God ; and, at one period, even refusing what seemed requisite to procure him the comforts of life ; therefore the way has been gradually made for him, in a wonderful manner ; and that by an overruling Power. And if he thus holds on faithfully, which I trust he will, he may hope to be blessed in basket and store. What he relinquished for the cause of Truth, will be rewarded an hundred-fold, even in this life. But he must not let the fear and the dread of man, in any respect, stand

between him and his duty : no—no—! neither must he turn his mind to any thing but the entering into close covenant with his Maker ; keeping near unto Him ;—making his vows, and keeping them, unto Him. His sacrifices must be bound to the horns of the altar. So will he be prepared to become a brighter star in glory ; and will shine more and more, when the perfect day shall be seen and felt in him. So will all his ways be ordered of the Lord, who will on every occasion direct his path; and he will be blest to those around him.”

To his affectionate friend and attendant, he said : “ I cannot yet give thee up. I have been enabled to give up my other dear friends and relations, even my precious brother whom I love so well ; but I cannot resign thee :” and he wept, which he was seldom seen to do ; wearing usually a smile of complacency. He proceeded thus : “ To leave thee behind to struggle with so much care and woe, as we are subject to while pilgrims here below, occasions conflicts I cannot overcome.”

His friend replied : “ In thy own strength, my dear, thou canst not ; but if thou wilt ask Him to whom all things are possible, to aid thee, I believe He will help thee. It was a *hard struggle* to me to resign thee ; but I have been enabled so to do.”

After a sweet and solemn pause, he took her by the hand, and continued : "Strength is now administered unto me—I can resign thee." "I hope," he added, "when that solemn period arrives, when my spirit is about to quit this tenement of clay, I may have done with time and the things pertaining thereto. And in this disposition of love, may I be strengthened to do my duty, in whatever way it may be required of me ; thereby evincing to all around, that I have not followed cunningly devised fables ; and that a confirmation may be handed to all, in a dying hour, of the blessing thou hast been made to me ; the expansion of which will also reach others, if it be the will of Him who only could have made it so."

Speaking of a dear absent young friend, he said : " — and I are linked together in the Truth. I should like him to attend my funeral, were it not for the expense :" and, still addressing his conversation to the same individual, he begged she would continue to extend a tender care over the preciously visited youth of whom he had been speaking.

He frequently spoke most affectionately of his parents, and hoped they would ever acknowledge the individual who had been

made a blessing to him and to his brother, as their daughter: adding, he believed they would do this for his sake, as well as their own.

Mentioning by name some friends who had visited and been very kind to him, "O!" said he, "they have uniformly manifested towards me, what Christians and professors of religion ought to be one towards another. May it be returned to them and their children, when I am no more." He spoke also of a dear friend and his wife, who had paid him an acceptable visit; in which they were engaged to minister to his state: "O!" said he, "I do love them; and I hope they love me. May they become more and more as a nursing father and a nursing mother in our Israel; for such are sadly wanted among us as a people; to care for the oppressed—to sympathize with the afflicted—to comfort those that mourn, and aid them on their way: this office, those dear friends have filled."

During his illness, the clergyman of the parish in which his parents resided, a kind and liberal minded man, came to see him several times, and read to him in the Scriptures, in a feeling manner. On the sacrament being mentioned, Thomas said: "I have long *felt it right* to decline that form, believing *the communion I have been favoured to ex-*

perience, at seasons, is what I am called upon to partake of. This union and communion with the Most High, is precious ; and, if rightly sought for, will be administered unto all : and this will be found sufficient."

The Clergyman asked him if he felt a dread of death, when awake at night : " O no !" he replied, " I then have some of my most comfortable seasons ; and I hope I shall be supported in the trying hour ; and to the end."

On the 5th of the 12th month, his brother who, like himself, was convinced of our principles, and had been received into membership, came to see him. They were closely united to each other *in the Truth*. Thomas expressed but little. He was now become very weak ; and his cough troublesome : for nearly three days before his decease, he could only speak in a whisper. At one time, he said he had spoken to his father, about his remains being interred with the people he had joined himself unto ; and to this he had kindly consented ; adding, to the friend who had nursed him in his sickness : " Thou knowest all I wish ; and if thou imparts it to my parents, their regard for me will make them readily comply." The truth of this remark was fully verified at the interment.

On the 7th of the 12th month, he called to his brother William, who was sleeping on another bed in the same room, and said to him, in a sweet, calm, and composed manner: “Do not be alarmed, my dear brother! my end is approaching. Soon I shall be in eternity; but do not, dear William, be frightened. There is no cause for fear.” All his care seemed to be not to alarm his brother; who held him in his arms for near an hour. About five o’clock, his mother called his affectionate female attendant, and in a most tender manner desired her not to be alarmed; but apprized her that her charge was drawing near his close; that he had not spoken for some time; but was looking earnestly at the different members of the family assembled round his bed, seemingly still wishing to see her. His friend hastening to him, he instantly looked at her, and gave his hand. After which, he lay back on the pillow, closed his eyes, and seemed to every one present as though he would have opened them no more. But after a while, to their great surprise, he did not only open his eyes, but calling on the friend who had last come in, he enquired of her, if his was not “*a dying bed.*” On her replying in the affirmative, he rejoined, “*May it then be blessed to all!*” After this he

called to his brother, and put the same question to him in the like composed manner. His brother expressed his belief that it was, and that he would be supported in that trying hour. On hearing this, Thomas sweetly said : “ It is the hand of Providence which has cast *thee* here to see my end ; but thou art in thy right allotment at ———.” He continued : “ You all thought I was going just now ; but no ! there is more to do ; and may you be strengthened to administer”—looking, as he spoke, at his brother and their sister friend. “ To minister what ? ” inquired his brother, “ *Peace* ? ”—“ O ! no—no ! ” he said, and shook his head. He was alluding, no doubt, from what followed, to his apprehension of what his brother and their friend would be required faithfully to administer, during the closing scene. Shortly after this, he took an affectionate leave of his parents, relatives, and friends ; requesting two individuals not to leave the room, as it would not be safe. He then closed his eyes again ; and about nine o’clock the family, except his mother, who remained his affectionate watcher, went down to breakfast. In about ten minutes, he addressed her in an audible tone, his voice for the first time returning, and enquired if she was alone. On her replying, “ Yes, my dear,”

he continued : “ Thou must wait on the Lord.—Sing praises unto Him.—It is a good and pleasant thing to praise the Lord,” &c.

After this he became anxious for the return of the rest of the family : and getting restless, raised himself up with so much strength as to induce his mother to send the servant to call those who were absent. On entering the room, they found him sitting up in his bed, and singing in a melodious voice. He quickly called out to his brother, and to all present, to join with him in singing praises unto God. And he addressed us, as his mother has justly observed, with the dignity and authority of a minister ; and why ? because the power of God, and the demonstration of the Spirit, accompanied it. He then called out earnestly to his brother William, and enquired of his female friend who stood next to him, and who was under great exercise of mind, if it were right to sing praises unto God. To which she replied : “ Yes ; under the true melody of heart which he was favoured to experience, it mattered not in what way it was manifested.” “ Come then,” he continued, still looking at the friend who had just given him her opinion, “ Begin ; thou art called upon, I believe, by a higher Power *so to do* :—Give up to conviction. We are

all waiting to hear thee—I am waiting—my brothers are waiting—for example sake, my dear sister, give up to thy duty—it is required of thee."

This unexpected summons, from a dying bed, as "a nail fastened in a sure place," was permitted to strengthen her to give up in supplication, which was the exercise she was under; and when she had to say, that she had watched over him with maternal care, and now resigned her tender charge into *His* divine hand, who *only* could have caused it to be so, &c."—he sprang up hastily, and clasped her in his arms, saying: "Ah! my dear companion, my sister—it was—it is so;" and he held her till she concluded her petition; which nothing, she believes, but an over-ruling Power, could have enabled her to do; she being fearful that he might have breathed his last in that posture hanging over her. On her rising, he tenderly embraced her for the *last time*, and said: *Farewell for ever here!*" He then turned quickly to another individual, and called upon him, in the same audible voice, to do his duty. "Come," said he, "my dear ——, thou art, I believe, the next qualified and prepared instrument to show forth the praises of thy Maker—come, join us in magnifying his

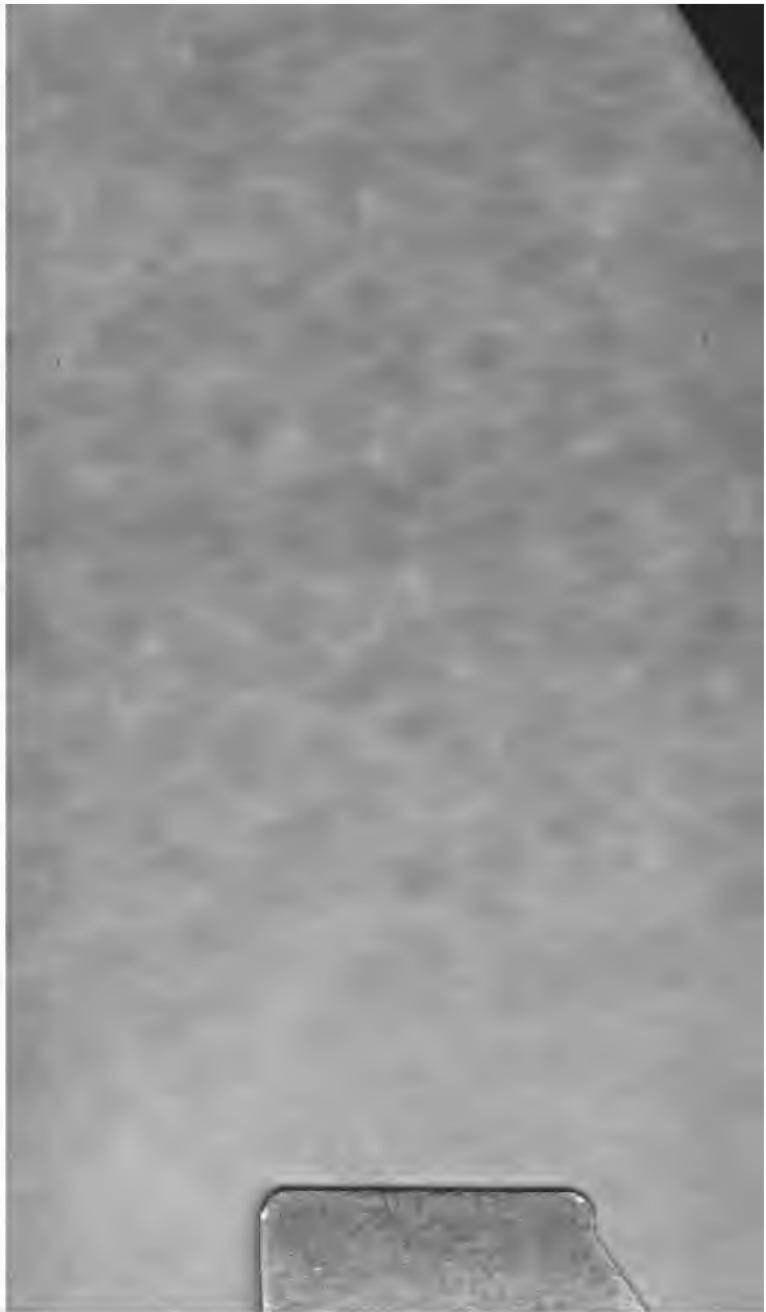
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Name ! let not the fear and dread of man deter thee from being obedient." To this it was replied : " Thou knowest it is not at all times required of us to use vocal expressions any way ; but I am thankful to be able to acknowledge, ' It is good to be here.' May a double portion of thy departing, purified spirit descend upon us, uniting *us all* in heart and mind ; and may we all be gathered into the true fold !"

At the conclusion of these observations, Thomas once more sprang up, and throwing his arms round his brother William, and embracing him tenderly, said : " *Now I sing a new song, and that for ever !* Praises and thanksgiving unto our God !" As the cadence died on his lips, he breathed his last, still cradled in his brother's arms. The sweetness and solemnity of the silent pause which sensibly prevailed for a considerable time after his departure, no words can define.

He died in his twenty-first year, the 7th day of the 12th month, 1825 ; and his remains were interred at Long-Sutton, Somersetshire.

THE END.



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